

Foster Parent Connections - October 12, 2023

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Announcements





The Call to Foster Podcast: S1E10

"Don't think your age counts you out."

[Season 1 Episode 10](#): We had the privilege of speaking with Dave and Patty Hedrick this month about their journey with foster care. They stress how important it is to pour into the kids and find common interests. Eager to care for more kids, the Hedricks want potential foster parents to know that age doesn't count you out and that these kids will keep you young.

Please subscribe to and share this podcast with anyone you know who might be considering fostering! You can listen to the podcast on most popular podcast platforms.

Reasonable and Prudent Parenting

The Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard (RPPS) states that a caregiver shall make careful and sensible parental decisions that maintain the health, safety, and best interests of the child, in addition to encouraging the emotional and developmental growth of the child. RPPS should be employed by any caregiver/foster parent who, under the responsibility of the state, is determining whether or not to allow a child to participate in extracurricular, enrichment, cultural and/or social activities.

Federal law was created to ensure children in foster care receive as close to a normal family and home-life as possible. Engaging in normal activities without interference from agencies promotes this ideal. **Normalcy is defined as activities that are age, or developmentally, appropriate.** This includes:

- Extracurricular activities
- Social activities
- Cultural activities
- Other enrichment activities

RPPS must apply to everyday routines and typical caregiver decisions. Examples include:

- Extracurricular clubs
- Sports
- Youth group activities
- Parties and sleepovers
- Outings with peers (including dating, if appropriate)
- Drivers education
- Vacations (with the designated parents or other families)
- School, camps and field-trips
- Recreational vehicle use
- Routine grooming or temporary changes to appearance. Always consider what is age and developmentally appropriate when making these decisions.

Respite VS Babysitting

Responsible and Prudent Parenting decisions include choosing a responsible individual to watch the child(ren) while you are away. Options include:

- Respite Care: This is an approved and contracted service paid by the state. Review Section 6, Chapter 17 of the Missouri Child Welfare Manual for more information.
- Babysitting: This is when a parent arranges for a responsible individual to watch their child(ren) while they are away from home. A babysitter is not required to complete respite training or be approved/contracted as a respite provider. The resource parent is responsible for paying a babysitter for the services the sitter provides.

When making decisions regarding age - or developmentally – appropriate activities, you should consider:

- Child's age
- maturity and developmental level
- Overall health and safety of the child
- Potential risk factors and appropriateness of the activity
- Best interests of the child
- Promoting normal childhood experiences where safe and appropriate
- Current status of the case plan, including impending reunification
- Health and safety of the placement provider(s) and their family
- Engagement level of the parent
- Interests and desires of the child
- Any other related factors based your knowledge of the child

6th Annual Shine a Light for Adoption



In preparation for National Adoption Month, the Missouri Children's Division is planning its **6th Annual Shine-A-Light for Adoption** celebrations to be held on **November 12, 2023 at 6:30pm**.

How can you help? We are committed to helping children find their forever homes through adoption. By hosting a Shine-A-Light for Adoption event, individuals, organizations, and churches in Missouri are helping bring awareness to the massive need for adoptive parents in Missouri. You can help by hosting an event in your area!

What does an event look like? Events could include music, prayer, adoption stories, fellowship, and information available on how to become an adoptive family. Local foster and adoptive families and adoption professionals can be invited to answer questions and provide information. Individuals and families could participate by turning their porch light on from 6:30pm-7:30pm. However you choose to honor and celebrate adoption at your event is up to you! Just be sure to share pictures of your events and activities using **#Shine4MOAdoption** on social media.

Trainings & Events



2023 Annual In-Service Training Reminder

All licensed resource providers are required to complete the one hour annual in-service training for 2023: [“The 4C’s of Healthy Sleep for Missouri Foster Resource Providers.” \(C170\)](#). The purpose of this training is to improve sleep education and child sleep health as one pathway to reduce or eliminate the need for psychotropic medications for sleep or daytime mood/behavior. Successful completion of training will require the licensed resource provider to pass the quiz with a score of 80% or more.

If you are a licensed resource provider, you can locate the training on [our website](#). Scroll down to Annual In-service Training. When the training is complete, the licensed resource provider is required to:

- Obtain a screen shot of the quiz completion score
- Create an e-mail that includes their name, date and C170 code number
- Send the e-mail to their licensing worker

Resource providers who do not have access to the online training can request a paper copy from their licensing worker. **This training must be completed by *Friday, December 15, 2023*.**

weekend wisdom

A new short-form podcast to strengthen your adoptive, foster, and kinship families through:



Practical tips



Lived experiences



Quick ideas from experts

Every Sunday,
where ever you listen to
our regular
CreatingaFamily.org
podcast!



The following links will take you to a multitude of training opportunities that are available for in-service hours:

[KVC Health Systems - Events August - October 2023](#)

[Foster Parent College - Online Training for Foster, Adoptive, and Kinship Parents and Caregivers](#)

[Training | Child Welfare Information Gateway](#)

[All Courses - FosterAdopt Connect Training \(thinkific.com\)](#)

[Family Development Training - Central Missouri Foster Care and Adoption Association](#)

Tips & Reminders

Constituent Services Email

If you are not receiving callbacks, having trouble getting a hold of someone, have a question about policy or just have a general complaint or accomplishment to share you may use [this email](mailto:ASKCD@dss.mo.gov) to communicate to the Children's Division:

[**ASKCD@dss.mo.gov**](mailto:ASKCD@dss.mo.gov)

Including Biological Parents

Whenever possible, parents should be included in things such as doctor appointments, school meetings, and special events. This might not be true in every case for a variety of reason such as case goal or if the team has concerns about a parent attending these. This should be a conversation with the Family Support Team and can be discussed during monthly home visits with the case manager. Your cooperation with this is greatly appreciated.

Free Lunches for Foster Children

This time of year there are always questions about free and reduced lunches. Foster children (children in the custody of the state) do automatically qualify. Once the state is no longer the guardian due to the child returning home, guardianship, or adoption, then the child no longer qualifies as a foster child because they are not. The child might still qualify based on the family's income.

We want to hear from you! If there is information you would like covered in the next Foster Parent Connections Newsletters email, Melissa.J.Selsor@dss.mo.gov.



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